

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

NATIONAL SECURITY DECISION  
DIRECTIVE NUMBER 2

February 25, 1981

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL STRUCTURE

I. National Security Council

The National Security Council (NSC) shall be the principal forum for consideration of national security policy issues requiring Presidential decision.

The functions and responsibilities of the NSC shall be as set forth in the National Security Act of 1947, as amended.

The NSC shall meet regularly. Those heads of Departments and Agencies who are not regular members shall participate as appropriate, when matters affecting their Departments or Agencies are considered.

The Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, in consultation with the regular members of the NSC, shall be responsible for determining and publishing the agenda and ensuring that the necessary papers are prepared. Decision papers shall be approved by the President and shall be disseminated by the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

II. NSC Responsibilities of the Secretary of State

The Secretary of State is my principal foreign policy advisor. As such, he is responsible for the formulation of foreign policy and for the execution of approved policy.

I have assigned to the Secretary of State authority and responsibility, to the extent permitted by law, for the overall direction, coordination, and supervision of the interdepartmental activities incident to foreign policy formulation, and the activities of Executive Departments and Agencies of the United States overseas. Such activities do not include those of United States military forces operating in the field under the command of a United States area military commander, and such other military activities as I elect, as Commander-in-Chief, to conduct exclusively through military or other channels. Activities that are internal to the execution and administration of the approved programs of

a single department or agency and which are not of such nature as to affect significantly the overall US overseas program in a country or region are not considered to be activities covered within the meaning of this Directive.

The Secretary of State is responsible for preparation of those papers addressing matters affecting the foreign policy and foreign relations of the United States for consideration by the NSC.

### III. NSC Responsibilities of the Secretary of Defense

The Secretary of Defense is my principal defense policy advisor. As such, he is responsible for the formulation of general defense policy, policy related to all matters of direct and primary concern to the Department of Defense, and for the execution of approved policy. The Joint Chiefs of Staff are the principal military advisors to me, the Secretary of Defense, and the NSC.

I have assigned to the Secretary of Defense authority and responsibility, to the extent permitted by law, for the overall direction, coordination, and supervision of the interdepartmental activities relevant to defense policy formulation.

The Secretary of Defense is responsible for preparation of those papers addressing matters affecting the defense policy of the United States for consideration by the NSC.

### IV. NSC Responsibilities of the Director of Central Intelligence

The Director of Central Intelligence is my principal advisor on intelligence matters, responsible for the formulation of intelligence activities policy and proposals, as set forth in relevant Executive Orders. I have assigned to the Director of Central Intelligence authority and responsibility, to the extent permitted by law and Executive Order, for the overall direction and coordination of the interdepartmental activities incident to intelligence matters.

The Director of Central Intelligence is responsible for the preparation of those papers addressing matters affecting the intelligence activities of the United States for consideration by the NSC.

### V. Interagency Groups

To assist the NSC at large and its individual members in fulfilling their responsibilities, interagency groups are established as described herein. The focus of these interagency

groups is to establish policy objectives, develop policy options, make appropriate recommendations, consider the implications of agency programs for foreign policy or overall national security policy, and undertake such other activities as may be assigned by the NSC.

A. The Senior Interagency Group -- Foreign Policy  
(SIG-FP)

To advise and assist the NSC in exercising its authority and discharging its responsibility for foreign policy and foreign affairs matters, the SIG-FP is established. The SIG-FP shall be composed of the The Director of Central Intelligence; the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; the Deputy Secretary of State (Chairman); the Deputy Secretary of Defense or Under Secretary of Defense for Policy; and the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. Representatives of other Departments and Agencies with responsibility for specific matters to be considered will attend on invitation by the Chairman.

The SIG-FP will:

1. Ensure that important foreign policy issues requiring interagency attention receive full, prompt, and systematic consideration;
2. Deal with interdepartmental matters raised by any member or referred to it by subordinate inter-agency groups, or, if such matters require higher-level consideration, report them to the Secretary of State for decision or referral to the NSC;
3. Assure a proper selectivity of the foreign policy/foreign affairs areas and issues to which the United States applies its efforts;
4. Monitor the execution of approved policies and decisions; and
5. Evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of interdepartmental overseas programs and activities.

A permanent secretariat, composed of personnel of the State Department augmented as necessary by personnel provided in response to the Chairman's request by the Departments and Agencies represented on the SIG-FP, shall be established.

B. The Senior Interagency Group -- Defense Policy (SIG-DP)

To advise and assist the NSC in discharging its authority and responsibility for defense policy and defense matters, the SIG-DP is established. The SIG-DP shall consist of the The Director of Central Intelligence; the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; the Deputy or an Under Secretary of State; the Deputy Secretary of Defense (Chairman); and the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. Representatives of other Departments and Agencies with specific matters to be considered will attend on invitation by the Chairman.

The SIG-DP will:

1. Ensure that important defense policy issues requiring interagency attention receive full, prompt, and systematic consideration,
2. Deal with interdepartmental matters raised by any member or referred to it by subordinate inter-agency groups, or if such matters require higher-level consideration, report them to the Secretary of Defense for decision or referral to the NSC; and
3. Monitor the execution of approved policies and decisions.

A permanent secretariat composed of personnel of the Department of Defense augmented as necessary by personnel provided in response to the Chairman's request by the Departments and Agencies represented on the SIG-DP, shall be established.

C. The Senior Interagency Group -- Intelligence (SIG-I)

To advise and assist the NSC in discharging its authority and responsibility for intelligence policy and intelligence matters, the SIG-I is established. The SIG-I shall consist of the The Director of Central Intelligence; the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; the Deputy Secretary of State; the Deputy Secretary of Defense; and the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. The SIG-I will be chaired by the Director of Central Intelligence. Representatives of other departments and agencies will attend on invitation by the Chairman when such departments and agencies have a direct interest in intelligence activities under consideration.

When meeting to consider sensitive intelligence collection activities referred by the Director of Central Intelligence, the membership of the Committee shall be augmented, as necessary, by the head of each organization within the Intelligence Community directly involved in the activity in question. When meeting to consider counterintelligence activities, the Committee shall be augmented by the Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Director, National Security Agency.

The SIG-I will:

- (1) Establish requirements and priorities for national foreign intelligence;
- (2) Review such National Foreign Intelligence Program and budget proposals and other matters as are referred to it by the Director of Central Intelligence;
- (3) Review proposals for sensitive foreign intelligence collection operations referred by the Director of Central Intelligence;
- (4) Develop standards and doctrine for the counterintelligence activities of the United States; resolve interagency differences concerning the implementation of counterintelligence policy; and develop and monitor guidelines, consistent with applicable law and Executive Orders, for the maintenance of central counterintelligence records;
- (5) Consider and approve any counterintelligence activity referred to the Committee by the head of any organization in the Intelligence Community;
- (6) Submit to the NSC an overall annual assessment of the relative threat to United States interests from intelligence and security services of foreign powers and from international terrorist activities, including an assessment of the effectiveness of the United States counterintelligence activities;
- (7) Conduct an annual review of ongoing sensitive national foreign intelligence collection operations and sensitive counterintelligence activities and report thereon to the NSC; and
- (8) Carry out such additional coordination; review and approval of intelligence activities as the President may direct.

A permanent secretariat composed of personnel of the Central Intelligence Agency, augmented as necessary by personnel provided in response to the Chairman's request by the Departments and Agencies represented on the SIG-I, shall be established.

D. Regional and Functional Interagency Groups

To assist the SIG-FP, Interdepartmental Groups (IGs) shall be established by the Secretary of State for each geographic region corresponding to the jurisdiction of the geographic bureaus in the Department of State, for Political-Military Affairs, and for International Economic Affairs. Each IG shall comprise the Director of Central Intelligence; the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; the appropriate Assistant Secretary of State (Chairman) and a designated representative of the Secretary of Defense. Representatives of other Departments and Agencies with responsibility for specific matters to be considered will attend on invitation by the Chairman. The IG for International Economic Affairs will, in addition to the above membership, include representatives of the Secretary of Treasury, the Secretary of Commerce, and the U.S. Trade Representative.

The Assistant Secretaries of State, in their capacities as Chairmen of the IGs, will assure the adequacy of United States policy in the areas of their responsibility and of the plans, programs, resources, and performance for implementing that policy. They will be responsible for the conduct of interagency policy studies within the areas of their responsibility for consideration by the SIG.

The Regional IGs also shall prepare contingency plans pertaining to potential crises in their respective areas of responsibility. Contingency planning will be conducted under the direction of and in coordination with the Chairman of the Political-Military IG.

To deal with specific contingencies, the IGs will establish full-time working groups which will provide support to the crisis management operations of the NSC. These groups will reflect the institutional membership of the parent body, together with such additional members as may be required to respond to the contingency with the full weight of available expertise.

To assist the SIG-DP, IGs shall be established by the Secretary of Defense to consider interdepartmental activities of direct and primary concern to the Department of Defense and defense policy.

To assist the SIG-I, IGs shall be established by the Director of Central Intelligence. The IG for Counterintelligence shall consist of representatives of the Secretary of State; Secretary of Defense; the Director of Central Intelligence (Chairman); the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; the Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Director, National Security Agency; and a representative of the head of any other Intelligence Community organization directly involved in the activities under discussion. Additional IGs may be established as necessary.

The operational responsibility or authority of a Secretary or other Agency Head over personnel from the Department or Agency concerned serving on IGs -- including the authority to give necessary guidance to the representatives in the performance of IG duties -- is not limited by this Directive.

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